

REMARKS:

Claims 1, 2 and 4-8 are presented for examination. Claims 1, 2, 5 and 8 have been amended hereby. Claim 3 has been cancelled hereby (without prejudice or disclaimer).

Notice is taken that claims 3-6 are indicated (at page 8 of the February 27, 2009 Final Office Action) as reciting allowable subject matter.

Reconsideration is respectfully requested of the rejection of claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over U.S. Patent 5,646,377 (hereinafter “Oda”), in view of U.S. Patent 5,557,076 (hereinafter “Wieczorek.”).

It is respectfully submitted that applicants do not necessarily concur with the Examiner in the Examiner’s analysis of the claims of the present application and the Oda and Wieczorek references.

Nevertheless, in order to expedite prosecution of the application, claim 1 has been amended hereby to incorporate the subject matter of now-cancelled claim 3.

Since the Examiner had indicated (at page 8 of the February 27, 2009 Final Office Action) that claims 3-6 recite allowable subject matter, it is respectfully submitted that claim 1 is now patentably distinct for at least this reason (that is, at least due to the inclusion of the subject matter of now-cancelled claim 3).

Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that the rejection of claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Oda in view of Wieczorek has been overcome.

Reconsideration is respectfully requested of the rejection of claims 2 and 7-8 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Oda in view of Wieczorek and further in view of U.S. Patent 6,476,799 (hereinafter “Lee.”).

It is respectfully submitted that applicants do not necessarily concur with the Examiner in the Examiner’s analysis of the claims of the present application and the Oda, Wieczorek and Lee references.

Nevertheless, in order to expedite prosecution of the application, it will simply be noted here that each of claims 2 and 7-8 depends (directly or indirectly) from independent claim 1.

Thus, these claims 2 and 7-8 are submitted to be patentably distinct for at least the same reasons as independent claim 1 discussed above.

Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that the rejection of claims 2 and 7-8 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Oda in view of Wieczorek and further in view of Lee has been overcome.

Finally, it is noted that support for the amendment to claim 1 may be found, for example, in now-cancelled claim 3.

Further, it is noted that support for the amendment to claim 2 may be found, for example, at pages 5 and 6 of the specification.

Favorable reconsideration is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,
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